

amended Claim 16, and have canceled Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-15 and 25-27 without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, Claims 16, 18-24 and 30-31 are currently pending in the Application.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has graciously indicated that the dependent Claim 27 was objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. While the Applicants disagree with the Examiner that the elements of independent Claims 1 and 16 are taught or suggested by the references cited, in an effort to further the prosecution of the present application and obtain a notice of allowance, the Applicants have included the element recited in dependent Claim 27 in that previously recited in independent Claim 16. In accordance with that stated by the Examiner in the Examiner's Action dated September 24, 2002, the remaining claims are no longer anticipated nor rendered obvious. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw any and all §102 or §103 rejections with respect to the pending claims, and pass the case to issuance.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, the Applicants now see all of the Claims currently pending in this application to be in condition for allowance and therefore earnestly solicit a Notice of Allowance for Claims 16, 18-24 and 30-31.



Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

The Applicants request the Examiner to telephone the undersigned attorney of record at (972) 480-8800 if such would further or expedite the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,
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APPLICATION NO. CHEN 4-17-157

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

(1) Kindly cancel Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-15 and 25-27 without prejudice or disclaimer.

(2) Please amend Claim 16 as follows:

16. (Amended) A process for fabricating an oxide, the process comprising:

(a) exposing said substrate to a first oxidizing ambient, wherein exposing said substrate to a first oxidizing ambient includes increasing from an initial temperature to a first temperature below a threshold temperature at a first ramp rate, increasing from said first temperature to a second temperature below said threshold temperature at a second ramp rate, and growing at least a portion of said oxide;

(b) exposing said substrate to a second oxidizing ambient, wherein exposing said substrate to a second oxidizing ambient includes increasing from said second temperature to a third temperature at a third ramp rate, and increasing from said third temperature to a temperature above said threshold temperature at a fourth ramp rate; and

(c) cooling said substrate to a temperature below said threshold temperature, wherein said oxide has a thickness of 15 Å or less.